

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2366

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 14, 2013

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably and with amendments Senate Bill No. 2366.

As amended, this bill establishes the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training Provider Demonstration Project in the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Under this demonstration project, DHS would form partnerships with “qualifying agencies,” including local governments, non-profit entities, institutions of higher education, foundations, and other eligible community-based organizations, to provide services under the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training Program (NJ SNAP ETP) to certain eligible participants who qualify for SNAP benefits. The services would help SNAP recipients acquire the skills, training, work, or experience necessary to obtain regular employment and would qualify for federal SNAP Employment and Training Program (SNAP ETP) reimbursements pursuant to the “Food and Nutrition Act of 2008,” Pub.L.110-246 (7 U.S.C. s.2011 et seq.), whereby 50 percent of qualifying agencies’ demonstration project expenditures could be reimbursed.

The bill requires DHS to issue a request for proposals from potential partner organizations within 60 days of its effective date. DHS would evaluate and select partner organizations based on their capacities to: serve eligible participants under NJ SNAP ETP; identify and utilize non-federal resources that qualify for federal reimbursements; present and implement a coherent program plan for NJ SNAP ETP activities; and perform effectively the programmatic and financial functions specified in the bill. DHS would select at least three partner organizations to participate in the demonstration project for a period of four years.

The bill requires partner organizations to serve eligible participants who elect to participate, and provides that participation in the demonstration project would fulfill SNAP employment and training requirements. The bill requires the county welfare agencies to collaborate with partner organizations, DHS, and the Department of

Labor and Workforce Development with respect to outreach and providing the results of SNAP eligibility determinations, among other things. The bill requires DHS to assist partner organizations with understanding the SNAP eligibility requirements and to administer the process of requesting and distributing federal SNAP ETP reimbursements generated by their activities.

The bill directs DHS to submit a revised State Employment and Training Plan to the Food and Nutrition Service in the United States Department of Agriculture in order to expand NJ SNAP ETP to include partnerships with qualifying agencies as described in the bill. The bill permits DHS to reserve up to five percent of federal SNAP ETP reimbursements received under the demonstration project to offset administrative costs associated with the project. The remaining federal reimbursements would be distributed to the participating partner organizations on a pro-rata basis and in accordance with a performance-based reimbursement system established under the bill. Additionally, the bill directs DHS to apply for any additional federal funds which may be available to implement the bill's provisions and issue an annual report summarizing the participants, activities, and outcomes.

The bill also directs DHS and the county welfare agencies to exclude from household income all legally-obligated or court-ordered child support payments paid by household members to non-household members for the purpose of determining SNAP income eligibility. This change is intended to encourage legitimate work and payment of child support by allowing more NJ SNAP ETP participants to keep their SNAP benefits when they become employed.

The committee amendments add a statutory reference regarding the annual report to be issued to the Governor and Legislature and are technical in nature.